113, 185, 427 Kashmir AV1

[For information on tenancy reform legislation in Jammu and Kashmir see 39: Patel, AW1 India, category 116, p. 351.]

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About three-quarters of the State forests have been demarcated; but before really scientific forestry can be introduced, it will be necessary that a regular survey should be made and a settlement of the forests effected, and the great task of drawing up working-plans for future guidance must be undertaken.

Before 1891 there was no proper management of the forests, and much damage was done by allowing traders to cut in the forests on payment of royalty without any supervision, while villagers also did immense injury to the forests in various ways, the State making little or no revenue. In 1891 the first attempts were made to put matters on a proper basis, with the result that, while most forms of forest injury except grazing have ceased, the profits have increased largely. Thus the net revenue in 1904–5 was 6 lakhs, while before 1891 it hardly exceeded 2 lakhs. The Forest department is under the control of a European Conservator, assisted by a staff of subordinates.

135 **Mines and minerals.**

Some authorities have held that there is not much hope of mineral wealth in the State; and among the reasons given is the fact that, as a rule, if valuable minerals exist, the natives of the country know of their existence. The Kashmīris, however, have excellent reasons for reticence on the subject of minerals, and the find of valuable sapphires in Padar in 1882, and the more recent discovery of coal at Ladda and Anji in the Udhampur district of Jammu territory, give hopes for the future. Vast fields have been found, in two sections of which it is estimated that there are 11 million tons of workable coal. The coal is extremely friable, dirty, and dusty. Some of it cokes strongly if subjected to great heat. It is held by competent authorities that the washed and briquetted coal of these fields will have a value equal to, if not greater than, Bengal coal. Exploration for minerals has not yet been attempted on sound or business-like lines. Excellent iron has been obtained at Sof in the south of Kashmīr; good limestone is available in large quantities; gypsum is abundant; and a recent discovery of gold has been made at Gulmarg, the chief summer resort of European visitors to Kashmīr.

463 **Arts and manufactures.**

The industries connected with sericulture, oil-pressing, and the manufacture of wine and brandy have already been mentioned, but the State is still more celebrated for its arts. The most important of these is described in the article on SRĪNAGAR, but other places also possess considerable reputation for various classes. Wood-carving is practised

692 On this day, His Highness the Maharaja Bahadur was graciously pleased to grant Letters Patent to the High Court of Judicature similar to those of High Courts in British India. This gave the court a status and prestige of its own.

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647 657 185 In July 1943, His Highness was pleased to appoint a Commission of Enquiry, under the presidentship of R. B. Ganga Nath, Chief Justice and President Praja Sabha, consisting principally of non-official members of the Praja Sabha and others representing different interests and communities to ascertain whether the existing constitution of the State had worked well and with a view to formulating a policy for the future and the evolution of an organic scheme for the administration of the State. The Commission has also been required to make recommendations to secure (1) the safety, integrity and security of the State, (2) the efficient and progressive character of the administration, (3) the uninterrupted and harmonious progress of the State with the object of drawing all the communities inhabiting its territories closer to one another in the common service of the State, (4) the development of the economic resources of the State and its people leading to a higher and healthier standard of life, (5) the increasing representation of the State-subjects in the higher offices of the State and the adoption of a policy aiming at the association of State-subjects of all denominations with the administration of the State, (6) the strict enforcement of the policy that appointments under the Government shall be reserved for the subjects of the State except where the possession of expert or technical knowledge or experience unavailable within the State, may make it essential to import outsiders for a temporary period only or except where any special reasons may justify the appointment of an outsider to an administrative post for a definite period, and (7) the adoption of effective measures to stamp out corruption in any shape or form from all departments of the State.

The particular attention of the Commission has been drawn to a number of specific matters, mentioned below:—

(1) provision of nursing and medical facilities particularly in the rural areas;

647 (2) improvement of sanitary conditions in the towns
657 of Jammu and Srinagar;

(3) prevention of venereal diseases, specially in
185 Udhampur, Ramnagar and Ramlan Tehsils;

(4) provision of water-supply in the entire *kandi* area;

(5) economic rehabilitation of the Frontier districts;

(6) the present position of State industries and their further development;

(7) grant of adequate aid to hereditary State-subjects to establish or promote industries suited to the conditions prevailing in the State territories;

(8) provision for technical, industrial and scientific education;

(9) reforms in the educational system tending to give a practical bias to education in all its stages, primary, secondary and higher, with the object of equipping the youth of the State to earn their livelihood;

(10) taking of practical steps *e. g.*, by the appointment of an Employment Board or any other suitable means to guide and help the youth of the State in securing employment or in adopting profitable careers;

(11) insuring of economic security amongst all classes of people, particularly the peasantry by developing their economic and material strength, securing a better standard of life, improving their health and by fostering co-operative effort directed to their welfare;

(12) investigation into the question of migration of labour from the State into British India and examination of the question whether from the point of view of the people such migration is profitable and deserving of encouragement or whether it is harmful calling for check;

(13) the desirability of stopping the purchase of agricultural and other lands by outsiders either directly, or indirectly through the intervention of the State-subjects;

(14) prevention of illicit traffic in women;

(15) investigation into the question whether the present marriage law is effective or whether it requires amendment;

(16) further intensification of the rural uplift movement;

(17) further measures for the more effective

647 prevention of erosion ;
657 (18) the development of Local Self-Government in
185 cities, towns and the village areas ;
(19) preservation and beautification of the country side ;
(20) planned framing of the Budget and apportionment of finance for nation-building activities over a period of years ;
(21) fixing of a suitable ratio between the expenditure on Medical relief, Education and Public Works Departments.

The Commission held its inaugural meeting on the 9th August 1943, when the President read out the following message received from His Highness:—" On this the first day of the sitting of the Commission, I desire to send a personal message of goodwill and encouragement in the arduous task which lies before you. I decided to appoint this Commission and to entrust to you the duty of making a thorough enquiry into matters that affect the well-being of my subjects and of submitting to me a well-considered report containing practical suggestions for the advancement in different spheres of life of the different communities. I shall watch with keen interest the progress of your work. If you work together, not in a narrow and mutually distrustful spirit, but with the fixed resolve to serve the best interests of the State and that loyalty on which I depend, I feel confident that your labours will be fruitful, and add to the moral and material welfare of the inhabitants of this State. I charge you to apply yourselves zealously and wisely to the task that lies before you with a fixed determination to arrive at wise and practical conclusions which would redound to the credit of the State and bring us all greater happiness. Very sincerely and earnestly, I wish you god-speed."

This was followed by a speech from the President in the course of which he said that they were all beholden to His Highness the Maharaja Bahadur for his gracious message. He went on to say : " Luckily, we are working under the aegis of a sovereign to whose heart your happiness, prosperity and progress are very near ; and who, I am assured, is keenly anxious that this Commission should lead to happy results. The terms of reference, I need scarcely remind you, are very wide and they cover

ractically the whole of the life of the people in different 647
pheres. I shall make an earnest appeal to you to make a 657
esponse to the command in the spirit in which it has been
ssued and to try for yourselves whether co-operation is 185
ot more fruitful than mere non-co-operation, when you
re called upon not merely to pass resolutions. But to
ecommend definite proposals for the amelioration of your
ellow citizens."

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The status of cultivators of land, whose condition [566]
was little better than that of serfs before the introduction 651
f Settlement of land, has been improved considerably.
The maximum State share of revenue is fixed at 30 per
ent. of the gross produce, and suspensions and remis-
ions are granted from time to time. The term of a
Settlement has been extended to 40 years. Long
before the establishment of the Praja Sabha, His Highness
had studied conditions of life in the interior of the State
by extensive tours. He had also introduced an effective 625
method of keeping in touch with the rural population
hrough conferences of the representatives of each Tehsil
n Jammu and Kashmir held annually at the headquarters
of the Government. This form of consultation with
popular representatives gave His Highness a more intimate
knowledge of the real needs and requirements of the
masses. As a result of the representations made at these
conferences and the discussions that followed, attention
was directed towards the improvement of means of com-
munication in the villages, improvement of livestock,
grant of cultivable land as *naulor* and provision of more
facilities for education and medical relief in the villages. 426
The Agriculturists' Relief Act was enacted, several years
before the institution of the Praja Sabha, to protect the
agriculturists from the extortion of money-lenders who
charged high rates of interest, and was the first of a series
of legislations for the protection of the agriculturists. It
prescribed the maximum rates of interest and empowered
the courts to examine the accounts of a loan and to fix
instalments for discharging debts on the basis of the paying
capacity of the debtor. Special *ailans* were issued
declaring agricultural holdings, livestock, agricultural imple-
ments, seeds, etc., as non-attachable for redemption of

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But with the spread of education both academic and technical the progress in trades and crafts, the general awakening and the propagation of information regarding the discoveries of fresh mineral and other resources and the ways of utilising them the conditions have and are progressively improving and with the State lead the people will not be found lacking in the necessary enthusiasm to take up to the industrial modes of life. 433

Although the conversion of the big mineral resources such as Coal, Iron, Barytes, Copper etc., into liquid wealth which will bring in an era of prosperity and material welfare in His Highness' territories is a question of time and money, yet the following minerals can be taken up for working immediately either through private capitalists or through the department itself and thus prove a source of augmenting the income of the State in some measure and at the same time opening out new careers for youngmen in these days of trade slump and unemployment :— 135

1. Sapphires of Paddar (Kishtwar tehsil).
2. Aquamarines of Dras (Skardu tehsil).
3. Gypsum, Ochres, Lignite and Steatite.
4. Raw materials whose working will lead to the establishment of profitable Glass and Pottery industry, Cement industry and other chemical industries.

It is needless to mention that prosperity of many advanced countries of the World—Canada, France, Great Britain, Germany etc., has been due to the scientific exploitation of their mineral wealth (especially Coal and Iron occuring in close association with each other) and there is no reason why by working on similar lines the Jammu and Kashmir State which is so rich in mineral wealth and has got both Coal and Iron occuring side by side in the Riasi tehsil where large Hydro-electric power can also be developed from the Chenab river, should not one day assume the role of a big Industrial country redounding to the mutual prosperity of both the Ruler and the ruled. May the Almighty accelerate the advent of that millennium.

Forests—*Area.*—During this decade the area under the control of the Forest Department increased from 9393 square miles to 10141 square miles. This was due partly to more areas having been demarcated, but more largely to taking over the forests belonging to the Bhadarwah and Langet Jagir at the time of the assimilation by the State of His Highness' Private Domains. 647 652 [185]

Organisation.—The main event during this decade was the re-organisation of the department in June 1924, when the department was placed under a Chief Conservator with four Conservators for Jammu, Kashmir, Working Plans and Utilisation. The number of Forest Divisions was also increased from 14 to 24.

Financial.—The expansion of the department's activities is best shown by the financial results. The following compares the results for 1977 and 1986-87 (in lacs of rupees):—

	1977.	1986-87.
Revenue ...	41·80	71·02
Expenditure ...	16·89	23·22
Surplus ...	24·91	47·80

During this decade the net income derived by the State from its forest estate nearly doubled.